



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

My Note Book.

Leonato.—Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?  
Don John.—Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.  
—Much Ado About Nothing.



FOR a long time there has not been such an eventful month in the New York art world as the one which has passed since the last issue of the magazine. The A. T. Stewart collection has been dispersed, and its gem, Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair," has, through the generosity of Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, been acquired by the Metropolitan Museum; the fine collection of Mr. Probasco, of Cincinnati, will have passed under the hammer before the ink which writes this is dry; Miss Catharine Wolfe's death has given the Metropolitan Museum her splendid gallery of paintings and a legacy of \$200,000, and that favored institution has further been the recipient of twelve paintings, at the hands of Mr. George I. Seney, whose market value is not less than \$40,000. These latter include "Expectation" and "The Bashful Suitor," excellent examples of Josef Israels, the Millet of Holland, and Henri Le Rolle's strong "Organ Rehearsal," which, it will be remembered, was brought over last spring by Mr. Durand-Ruel for the Impressionist Exhibition. With Mauve's "Spring" and "Autumn," we have, therefore, through Mr. Seney's discriminating gift, several important modern artists represented in the Museum, whose names are not even to be found in the catalogue of the far-reaching Wolfe collection. If some one will now present that institution with good examples of Millet, Delacroix, De Neuville and Mesdag, the list will be very nearly complete.

MR. SENEY'S gift followed close upon that of "The Horse Fair." Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt certainly set a splendid example. There was at first much speculation as to the identity of the buyer, but the mystery only remained such until Mr. Vanderbilt could duly give the first notice of the presentation to the President of the Museum. Such reticence is very different from that of the average American picture-buyer, who, for reasons best known to himself, is anxious to keep his purchase a secret. The reason he gives sometimes is that, if it is known that he is a buyer, he will be overrun by dealers who will want to sell to him.

THIS is rarely the true reason. More often he tries to maintain secrecy for fear of creditors; and, more often still, because he is a small-souled fellow, who, through some curious process of reasoning, imagines that his purchase will somehow become less valuable if every one knows about it. In both of these last two cases the solution of the petty secret generally comes, sooner or later, with the sale of the effects of the insolvent "collector," who, after strutting for a very little while as a connoisseur, goes back to his original philistinism, from which, likely enough, he would never have emerged from any choice of his own. Of course he has no sense of duties connected with the ownership of a work of art. With his purely commercial training he would think you were jesting if you told him any are thereby involved. A picture or a statue to him represents simply a certain sum of money, and that money having been his, he would laugh to scorn the idea of any moral obligation to the painter or to the world at large. It would probably be news to him that in Europe, among noblemen, and other persons of taste, whose example he would be inclined to imitate—for naturally he is a snob—it is not the custom to hide one's art treasures, but to lend them at exhibitions, and to see that they are properly catalogued, located, and their possession duly credited to their present owners. He may not know that in the Old World all the great pictures of the great masters are thus recorded, and that their owners are even proud to have them engraved for the pleasure of those unable, like themselves, to possess costly originals. It is only in this New World of ours of brand-new "connoisseurs" that the value of a work of art is supposed to be enhanced by keeping it out of sight.

THE petty feeling at the bottom of this jackdaw pleasure of concealment is shown in curious ways. Every dealer will tell you that, no matter how fine may be the pictures, nor how much they may want them, certain rich men will not look at them, if they learn that they have been exhibited in this country, or even that they have been shown before in the shop to some one else; and it is the same in regard to Oriental porcelains, lacquers, and similar objects. The dealers humor the folly by taking this kind of customer to a private room, and they sometimes pretend to open in his presence the "original cases." It is the sad truth that love of art for art's sake has little to do with the acquisition of the rare and costly objects that form many collections in this country.

LET me add a few words to the merited eulogiums by the daily press on the late Catharine Lorillard Wolfe. The simple record of the unselfish life of this noble-hearted lady surely is worth thousands of pulpit sermons. Would that her example might touch the hearts of some of those among us, who, unable to spend a tithe of their incomes, jealously hoard their wealth, seemingly without a thought beyond the demands of their mere personal comfort. What a contrast! Miss Wolfe during her lifetime bestowed millions in charity, and now, after death, her memory blossoms in the dust, long to be honored by reason of her benefactions.

ONE of the most important of these is the legacy to the Metropolitan Museum of Art of her paintings, valued at about half a million of dollars, together with the sum of \$200,000 to add to their number. The collection as a whole is unfamiliar to the public, for there is no special gallery in the house, to which strangers could be admitted. Some of the principal canvases, however, have from time to time been lent for purposes of charity, and are well known. The range of artists shows a somewhat eclectic taste, which, with the recent additions to the galleries of the Museum, through the generosity of Mr. Seney, leaves but few modern paintings of note unrepresented there. The Wolfe collection includes landscapes by Rousseau, Corot, Troyon, Dupré, Diaz, and Koekkoek; three examples of Meissonier—one, "The Sign Painter," a water-color. There are also water-color drawings by Fortuny ("Camels at Rest"), Vibert ("The First Born" and "Selling Consecrated Palms"); two by Louis Leloir; and in the same medium are "Desolation," by Schreyer, a "Cuirassier," by Detaille, and the "Massacre of the Mamelukes," by Bida. Notable paintings are "The Shulamite," by Cabanel, a life-size, seated figure of a dark-eyed Oriental beauty, wearing an expression of rapturous expectancy; by the same artist—painted fourteen years ago—a full-length, life-size portrait of Miss Wolfe, attired in white satin, and standing with easy grace, as if receiving guests—which, of course, will be given a place of honor when the collection is arranged. Munkacsy's bitumen-blackened "Mont de Pieté," with its motley array of customers, awaiting their turn at the single window, where the pawnbroker seems to be driving a hard bargain with a wretched-looking woman, who is pledging her household effects. "A Grand Pardon in Brittany," a famous canvas, representing the outside of a village church, with a hundred or more figures, all of whom, children included, carry lighted tapers. Decamps is represented by "The Night Watch at Smyrna," who are sallying forth from the citadel; Fromentin by "Arabs Crossing a Ford;" Couture by "The Idle Scholar," similar in subject to the canvas in the Probasco collection, noticed elsewhere. By Rosa Bonheur are a "Study of a Hound" and "Weaning the Calves;" by Van Marcke, an "Old Water-Mill and Cattle;" by Schreyer, "Arabs on the March;" by Gérôme, "An Abyssinian Chief" and "A Sheikh at Devotions" in an ancient mosque in Cairo. There are a "Canal in Venice," by Rico; "The Letter," by Meyer von Bremen; Robert-Fleury's "Musical Cardinal" seated at a bass-viol; two pictures of still-life, by Preyer; an "Etruscan Vase Dealer," by Hamon; "The Storm," by Cot, which was illustrated by a pen-drawing by the artist in an early number of The Art Amateur; "The Sick Child," by Frère; "The Love Dream," by Hans Makart; "The Fountain of the Toreros, Granada," and "The Letter of Recommendation," by Worms; "The Reprimand" and "The Startling Confession," by Vibert; "Inundation of the Piazza of St. Mark, Venice," by Ziem; "The Armourer's Shop," by Villegas. When I add to these "The Japanese Robe," which is a characteristic Alfred Stevens; and "Homage to Beauty," an

uncompromising Toulmouche; a "Haidee," by Chaplin, and "The Last Token," the well-known picture by Gabriel Max, representing a Christian martyr in a den of lions looking up to some one who has thrown her a rose; some lost sheep, by Schenck; a Rashi-Bazouck, by Bargue, a Berne-Bellecour, a Boldini, a Bonnat, a Pasini, a Willems, and a Von Kaulbach—need anything more be said to indicate the truly catholic taste of the collector? Among the few American paintings are a portrait, by Daniel Huntington, of Miss Wolfe's father, a picture she valued highly, having had several replicas made from it to give away, and a Winslow Homer, showing the rescue from a wreck.

THERE are no "old masters," but there is the important painting "The Holy Family," which many will consider the gem of the collection, which that modern master, Knaus, has treated with originality and uncommon technical skill. "The Rest in Egypt" would be a better name. It represents a night scene, with the silver crescent moon to the left of the canvas, while, revealed by supernatural light, and all bathed in the warm summer air, is the Virgin holding in her lap the Infant Jesus, whose face is turned toward a beautiful cherub, who, with his chubby hands clasped in adoration, leans against the knees of the Madonna. Swarms of cherubim hover above the holy group or fly about with airy abandon. Joseph is in the background with the patient ass, and lifts his eyes heavenward in ecstatic wonder. The composition is full of beauty in parts and as a whole. Fault may be found that the Virgin is too evidently of the German peasant type, and that the angels are too much of the earth. Possibly it was on this account that the Russian Empress, for whom it was painted, declined to take it, and Miss Wolfe was enabled to secure it for her collection for the sum of \$20,000. However this may be, it is generally regarded as Knaus's masterpiece, and the Metropolitan Museum is to be congratulated on the possession of it.

IN spite of the large prices realized by a few of the paintings in the A. T. Stewart collection, the sale cannot be called a pecuniary success. It is true that, Meissonier's "1807" cost \$60,000 and brought \$66,000, the Rosa Bonheur cost \$40,000 and brought \$53,000, Fortuny's "Serpent Charmer" \$6000 against \$13,100, and Nicol's "Disputed Boundary" \$9000 against \$15,250; but there were serious losses on most of the high-priced pictures, as will be seen from the following table:

	Cost.	Brought.
Baugniet..... "Blind Man's Buff,".....	6,000	2,800
Bierstadt..... "Seal Rock,".....	3,500	2,500
do..... "Emerald Pool,".....	15,000	3,100
Boldini..... "Park of Versailles,".....	6,000	3,400
Bouguereau..... "Return from the Harvest,".....	11,500	8,000
Boulanger..... "The Appian Way,".....	3,500	1,000
Camphausen..... { "Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell,".....	3,000	1,500
Church..... "Niagara Falls,".....	15,000	7,050
De Nittis..... "Return from the Races,".....	6,000	1,425
Escosura..... "Hadden Hall,".....	2,500	1,550
Fichel..... { "Going to Mass, St. Sul-pice,".....	6,000	1,050
Fortuny..... "The Beach at Portici,".....	13,000	10,100
Français..... "Ruins of Pompeii,".....	2,000	800
E. Frère..... "Dinner-Time,".....	3,500	2,625
Gérôme..... "The Chariot Race,".....	33,000	7,100
do..... "Une Collaboration,".....	17,500	8,100
do..... "Pollice Verso,".....	20,000	11,000
Hiddemann..... { "Columbus's Triumphant Entry,".....	3,500	500
Huntington..... { "Lady Washington's Reception,".....	20,000	3,300
Jimenez..... "A Spanish Fair,".....	5,000	2,900
Kaemmerer..... "The Croquet Party,".....	4,000	2,400
Kellogg..... "After the Bath,".....	10,000	525
Luckt..... "The Carousal,".....	3,500	400
Meissonier..... "At the Barracks,".....	21,000	16,000
do..... "Charity,".....	24,000	10,500
Meyer von Bremen..... "The Kind Sister,".....	6,000	4,450
do..... "The First Sorrow,".....	6,000	1,925
Munkacsy..... "The Visit to the Baby,".....	13,500	8,700
Murillo..... "Boy with Mousetrap,".....	5,000	1,100
Piloty..... { "The Triumph of Germanicus,".....	8,000	3,900
Sohn..... "Diana and Nymphs,".....	6,000	725
Stevens..... "After the Ball,".....	6,000	2,850
Titian..... "Madonna and Child,".....	3,000	800
Toulmouche..... "The Serious Book,".....	6,000	2,150
Verboeckhoven..... "On the Road,".....	5,000	2,500
Vernet..... "Triumph of Julius Caesar,".....	6,000	2,300
Von Kaulbach..... "Cupid and Psyche,".....	6,000	925
Willems..... "The Bride,".....	5,000	725
Yvon..... "Susannah and the Elders,".....	3,000	825
Winterhalter..... "Battle of Inkerman,".....	3,000	550
Ziem..... "Doge's Palace,".....	2,500	1,400
	\$348,000	\$145,450



This is truly an unfortunate showing—a loss of \$202,550 on 41 pictures—for the estate. From many of the prices in the first column it is evident that Mr. Stewart was badly advised—to put it mildly. Against this may be given as a partial offset the following table, which shows considerable profits:

	Cost.	Brought.
Daubigny.....“The End of May,”.....	5,500	7,900
Detaille.....“Camp of St. Maur,”.....	2,500	3,600
Fortuny.....“The Serpent Charmer,”..	6,000	13,100
Lesrel.....“The Bandit's Ruse,”.....	450	1,375
Meissonier.....“1807,”.....	60,000	66,000
Meyer von Bremen.....“Industry,”.....	2,500	3,650
Erskine Nicol.....“The Disputed Boundary,”	9,000	15,250
Troyon.....“Cattle,”.....	2,500	7,150
Zamacois.....“The Begging Monk,”.....	3,800	4,400
do.....“Court Jesters,”.....	6,500	8,000
	\$98,750	\$130,425

\* \* \*

THE silly economy of the executors in allowing the pictures to be “cleaned” by ignorant persons, instead of putting the work into the hands of experts, will probably account for some part of the loss. The unwieldy size of some of the canvases, it is claimed, had also much to do with the matter, but this will hardly apply to the nearly \$20,000 loss on two Meissoniers, to over \$5000 loss on two Meyer von Bremens, nearly \$3000 on the Alfred Stevens, \$2500 on the Verboeckhoven, and nearly \$4000 on the Toulmouche—\$6000, of course, was a preposterous price for this picture. The American Art Association claims that the average was as good as that of the Morgan sale. But that is absurd. The 217 Stewart pictures brought \$513,750; the 240 Morgan pictures \$885,300. The latter were originally purchased at even more reckless prices than most of those in the Stewart collection, but the average excellence of the Morgan paintings was much higher than that of the others, which doubtless helped the sale.

\* \* \*

REFERRING to Meissonier's “1807,” The Tribune remarks: “It is said that Mr. Hilton was indignant over the statements made relative to the condition of the picture, and he was determined that he would run the price up until the painting fell to him.” It was knocked down to him at \$66,000—a good stiff price—but it is not clear how the condition of the picture is affected by this fact. There is a vulgar saying that “Money talks;” but it is the kind of talk that impresses only the vulgar. Any person familiar with paintings can see at a glance that the “1807” is so badly cracked that it will take an experienced restorer a long while to put it in proper order. To what manipulation Mr. Hilton intends to subject the picture, now that he has bought it, it is not easy to conjecture. His views on art are peculiar. When he was a City Park Commissioner he is said to have favored white-washing the public statuary, and who knows but that he may have in store for us some even still more startling experiment for the rehabilitation of Meissonier's masterpiece, which has already had a wonderful experience under the care of Mr. Short, the picture-frame maker, and his amiable wife? I cannot say exactly what they have done to it, but it seems as if something has carried away certain fine glazings with which Meissonier is accustomed to finish his paintings. And this is not only the case with “1807,” but with many other valuable pictures in the collection. Knoedler will probably send “At the Barracks” to be retouched by Meissonier. If Mr. Hilton wants to save his “1807” from utter ruin, he will do the same thing, after, however, first getting the picture “relined,” which will bring the cracks together ready for the finishing touches of the master—if the master can be persuaded to touch up a picture which has been so badly treated.

\* \* \*

A LONDON despatch to The New York World says: “An English publisher lately made Meissonier an offer for the right of engraving the celebrated picture entitled ‘1807,’ wherein Napoleon is seen reviewing his troops. The artist accepted the offer, subject to the condition that the work should be intrusted to a French engraver. A difficulty, however, arose when the owner and holder of the picture, an American, was applied to. He refused to part with it. So Meissonier has set to work, and in another month he hopes to have completed a new ‘1807,’ with corrections and new details, and from this the engraving will be made.”

The World commenting editorially on this, remarks: “The late Mr. Stewart paid a price, until recently unparalleled in the annals of modern art, for the painting in question, and its duplication by the artist is not only a gross breach of faith toward the first purchaser, but a piece of

downright dishonesty, seriously impairing as it does the value of the original picture.” Mr. S. P. Avery comes to the rescue of Meissonier. He says, truly: “It is not an uncommon thing for famous artists to repeat their most successful works, and it has not been considered a heinous offence to do so.” He also explains that “the ‘1807’ which the artist is now finishing, and which was begun over a year ago, is a water-color drawing, and is not near the size of the Stewart picture, and is treated with so many omissions, additions and radical alterations as to make it essentially a new composition.” In connection with these latter statements, I translate from The Figaro the following from the pen of Albert Wolff:

“As a whole, the work of Meissonier is truly a second edition of the canvas in America, but the painter has considerably modified his first composition. In both, the Cuirassiers gallop, shouting, past the Emperor, and Napoleon salutes them by lifting his hat. But, in the new work, the escort of the Emperor has been added to, not only as to the staff, but also by a group of scouts (guides), who are drawn up, carbine in hand, to the right of the Emperor. To complete the warlike picture, M. Meissonier has introduced, in the distance, a battery of artillery, filing by at full gallop, in the same direction as the Cuirassiers. The work has gained in animation and variety.”

\* \* \*

HERE is a characteristic anecdote of the late Mr. Vanderbilt, which, if not true, ought to be so. When, on one occasion, he was in Paris, buying Meissoniers and other costly paintings, he was met one morning, early, in the Avenue de l'Opera, a package under his arm. “How is this?” he was asked, “Abroad so early! Ah, I see!” continued his Parisian friend, glancing at the package, “you have been to secure a trouvaille, some object of art, another marvel for your collection?” “Well, no,” replied Wm. H., “I bought a pair of shoes, yesterday, which hurt me, and I am taking them to the shoemaker to have them put in order.”

\* \* \*

SOME ONE takes the pains to inform me that, “previous to and during the A. T. Stewart sale, which was under its management, the American Art Association privately exhibited paintings belonging to the Probasco collection to several prominent buyers, thereby putting the latter in competition with pictures by the same masters in the Stewart collection,” and asks, “Can such a proceeding be called legitimate?” If the facts were all stated in the proposition, there could be but one answer to the question—a decided negative. The inquirer, however, would probably find on investigation that the Probasco pictures shown to customers during the Stewart sale were some that happened to be in the building at the time for the purpose of being photographed for the illustrated catalogue then in preparation.

\* \* \*

By a slip of the pen, last month, it was made to appear that the crystal globe, then on its way from Japan, on an order from Messrs. Gribble & Nash, was only five inches in diameter. Of course, it was the famous six-inch sphere that Mr. Rockefeller had bought. I may add that it duly arrived, and is now the gem of his collection.

\* \* \*

IT seems only yesterday that Asher Brown Durand, affectionately called “The father of American painting,” was to be found in the glory of an honored old age, in his New Jersey home, at Maplewood, hale and hearty, surrounded by the sketches and studies of a lifetime; for they filled his studio. But in the natural order of things these relics of his brush—ranging in date from about his first attempts in color to the last of his studies—have been stripped from the walls, and, as these pages go to press, they are being dispersed at auction, together with his interesting collection of engravings by Morghen, Sharp, Bartolozzi and others. Without detracting at all from his honorable record as a landscape painter, it may be predicted that the reputation of Durand will live longest by the admirable work of his burin. It was as an engraver, as a boy of ten years old, that he made his first artistic essay. He hammered out a copper penny for a plate, and, fashioning his own tools, cut on it a copy of a head of Washington. It was a long way from that crude effort to his excellent print after Trumbull's “Declaration of Independence,” which now hangs in thousands of homes, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, or to his charming “Ariadne” after Vanderlyn. I advise those of my readers who may have good impressions of these prints, and more particularly of Durand's portraits of William Fuller, after Ingham, and John Quincy Adams, and Mayor Hone, of New York, or of “The Wife,” engraved after S. F. B. Morse, by Durand, more than half a century ago, for an

“Annual”—I advise, I say, those who have copies of these fine old prints to prize them; one of these days collectors will be glad to pay high prices for them.

\* \* \*

THE opportunity should not be lost to see De Neuville's splendid military painting, “Tel-el-Kebir,” on exhibition at Knoedler's. It is remarkable that the most notable recent battle-pieces commemorative of British valor, such as the present, and “Rorke's Drift,” have been painted by a Frenchman. Certainly De Neuville does not stint the laurels to the traditional foemen of his country. We see here, in the gray mist of daybreak, the intrepid scaling of the Arab intrenchments by the gallant Highlanders of the “Black Watch.” There are no ladders except those extemporized by these sturdy fellows by mounting on each other's shoulders. The presence of the surprised enemy is only indicated by the few corpses of Arabi's Abyssinians in the foreground. Arabi himself and his army are away off in the distance.

\* \* \*

By a letter I have just received from Dr. Max Ohnefalsch Richter, consulting archæologist and superintendent of excavations in Cyprus, whose discoveries have already given the last blow to the credit of Colonel di Cesnola as a scientist, it appears that this scholarly and indefatigable writer has been making many new discoveries of great importance. Among these are several terra-cotta heads in the best Greek style, but made on the island—something entirely unexpected. A girdle composed of silver plaques, wrought with Phœnician designs, a finger-ring in gold, and part of a massive golden cup are among the recent finds. Several drinking vessels, of pottery, of a shape not hitherto known were discovered. Stone sphinxes, terra-cotta figurines, which had been imported from Tanagra, and numerous well-preserved and beautifully decorated amphoræ, cups and vases, have also been brought to light, and are now in the Cyprus museum, with the exception of a few, which Mr. Watkins, who supplies the funds for the excavations, has presented to the British Museum. The photographs of these objects, which Dr. Richter kindly sends me, fully bear out his enthusiastic description.

\* \* \*

STEPHEN FISKE, in an admirable criticism of “Christ Before Pilate,” in The Spirit of the Times—which I regret cannot be quoted in full—makes this point:

“According to St. John, no such scene as that painted by Munkacsy could have occurred. He says that the Jews would not go into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled, and so prevented from eating the Passover. Pilate went out to them, heard their accusation, re-entered the hall, called Jesus in, and questioned him alone. Here was Munkacsy's subject: Christ standing before the Roman governor in the otherwise empty hall, and the angry priests and people glaring in at the wide entrance, eager to hear what was said, anxious lest their victim should escape through Pilate's indifference or conversion. St. John emphasizes the fact that the Jews did not enter the judgment-hall by saying that, after Pilate's interview with Christ, ‘he went out again unto the Jews.’ An artist should be historically correct when he has so plain a history before him.”

\* \* \*

MR. SEDELMAYER intends to bring to this country, next year, Munkacsy's “Christ on Calvary,” which is about the same size as the “Christ Before Pilate.” It will be in order then to demonstrate that the new-comer, and not Mr. Wanamaker's prize, is really the “great religious painting of the age.”

\* \* \*

THE third exhibition and “sale,” within a few weeks, at Moore's rooms, of the numerous “Hazeltine collection of paintings,” and the publicity given to it, suggest the inquiry whether or not the whole business is not an imposition on the public? As I have had occasion to point out before, at these so-called auctions no pictures are really sold unless the bids are satisfactory to their owner. In a recent conversation, Mr. Hazeltine attempted to justify his course on the ground that he would be foolish to sacrifice his property. But this excuse will hardly satisfy the public, who have the right to suppose that an auction by a reputable firm means that the lots offered for sale are really to be sold to the highest bidder. The practice of “running up” goods and bidding them in through confederates in the audience, of course, is common enough in Chatham Street; but such sales are known as “Peter Funk” or “mock auctions,” and are generally got up for the purpose of swindling greenhorns from the country. Certainly, no first-class merchant can afford to resort to such devices, and no first-class auctioneers would countenance them. That the public resent this sort of thing is illustrated by the fact that at least two important picture sales this winter

proved disastrous to the perfectly honorable principals on account of the bad reputation of the auction rooms.

\* \* \*

NO one should think of attending an auction for the purpose of bidding unless the advertisement has announced the sale to be "without reserve." If, after that, any lot should be withdrawn from competition, or there should be any other evidence of collusion between auctioneer and principal, both of these persons can be prosecuted for "obtaining money under false pretences."

\* \* \*

THERE would be much less of this sort of imposition if the public knew their rights better. How many readers of "My Note Book" are aware, I wonder, that they can recover in full from any bric-à-brac, furniture or other dealer, who sells them articles for "old" which turn out to be modern? It does not matter if the buyer finds out the deception years after he has paid his money. Let him threaten to prosecute for "obtaining money under false pretences" and there is no dealer in the city who will not hasten to reimburse him and take back the mock "antique."

MONTEZUMA.

#### THE PROBASCO COLLECTION.

IF it is true, as has been stated, that Mr. Probasco had at one time the intention to leave his collection of paintings to the city of Cincinnati, that enterprising town has lost a good thing in giving him cause to change his purpose and dispose of his pictures by sale. The story goes that the Cincinnatians considered the collection already theirs, and fell into the habit of speaking rather slightly of it. Yet it contained three of the finest Rousseaus in the country, a magnificent Breton, a fine Troyon, a Millet of the first quality, and other pictures which would do honor to any gallery in the world. Even those paintings to which exception might be taken on artistic grounds were interesting, either because of their subjects or as examples of the periods to which they belonged. Several, like Aubert's poetic "Reverie," have been made generally known by engraving. In *The Art Amateur*, last summer, in one of our articles on perspective, we gave an engraving of Breton's "Colza Gatherers." Millet's "Bringing Home the Calf" is also pretty well known through reproductions. Auguste Bonheur's "Landscape and Cattle" is a study for the large "Environs of Fontainebleau" which was in the Stewart collection. But many of the most important pictures were unknown except by reputation in New York, and, coming here from the West, furnished an agreeable surprise.

Of the Rousseaus, that which was most generally appreciated was the "Summer Landscape," a fine composition centring in a mass of light, cumulus clouds reflected in the water of a calm river. To the left is a cottage hidden in trees, to the right, a larger tree, and others, in full summer foliage, lit by an afternoon sun, stud the distant river banks in the centre of the picture. The foreground is formed by a curve of the weedy shore which is in deep shadow. The sentiment of the picture is that expressed by Tennyson in "The Lotos Eaters":

"A land where it seemed always afternoon."

Almost equally fine is the very different "Forest at Fontainebleau," a distant view of a portion of the forest forming a crest to a broken hill which dips to the level country toward the right. In the middle distance are some houses. A road runs through rough fields in the foreground. There are a few little figures near it. The sky is that of a fine noon-day in late summer. "Autumn Woods," the third example of Rousseau in the collection, is again different both in subject and in treatment. The scene is a rough clearing in the woods, with a glimpse of distant hills through the foliage, and a wood-cutter at work. It is remarkable for the vivid oppositions of autumnal tints, reds, greens, browns and grays, resulting in a general warm, luminous tone. All three are finished paintings, not like the sketches in bitumen and burnt Sienna with which we are more familiar.

The Delacroix, "Clorinda Delivering the Martyrs," must, however, be considered simply as a sketch for color and composition. The subject is from the second canto of "Jerusalem Delivered." In the centre is a pile of fagots on top of which the two victims of the Saracens are bound. Their tormentors, grouped at its base, in garments of brilliant red, green and blue, are being dispersed in all directions by the plunging of Clorinda's war-horse. The maiden, herself, is in armor, with a leopard-skin over her shoulders. The painting has all

the notable faults of drawing, lack of values, and indifferent brush-work which Delacroix so often put into works of this class. The composition, however, is spirited, and the color gorgeous.

Rosa Bonheur's "Landscape and Cattle" was an interesting example. The cows are—one standing, one lying near a small pool in the shade of a grove of pollard willows. A white dog is sleeping near them. Couture's "Day-Dreams" has all his morbidez of color, and is otherwise a good specimen of his work. It is a life-size portrait study of a school-boy. His books and slate are on his desk near him and he has been blowing soap-bubbles, two of which float in the air above his head. The Fromentin is of a somewhat unusual subject, a "Street Scene in Algiers." Stacks of dingy buildings rise like piles of bricks in a brick-yard on either hand. A blue sky, slightly mottled with clouds, appears between them. Awnings are stretched across, and, in their shade, a crowd of figures draped in blue or white are watching the performance of a troupe of negro-dancers and musicians. The principal dancer has a flaming red tunic, which gives a brilliant spot of color in the centre of the picture, repeated, here and there, in the turbans and sashes of the crowd of Arabs.

"Landscape and Cattle," by Jules Dupré, shows a low rolling country, with farm-houses in the distance, and cattle standing in shallow water in the foreground. A breezy sky, with clouds in the lower half and driving mist in the upper. The entire picture glows with Dupré's sparkling effects of color as of crushed topaz, garnets and emeralds. A good Diaz, "Forest at Fontainebleau," shows the usual gray tree-trunk with its load of richly colored foliage and filtered sunshine. Two Schreyers "of the good period" were in the collection, "Les Arabes en Egypt" and "Russian Landscape, Horses and Figures." A curious Isabey, "Cupid's Message to the Graces," shows three female figures in costumes of the last century. They are in a park, reading what is probably a love-letter, and a lot of little pink cupids are fluttering among the foliage. Gérôme's "Syrian Shepherd," though not large (33x18) is an uncommonly good example. The shepherd is mounted and armed like a brigand. His flock of goats follow him in solid phalanx and kick up a cloud of dust hardly to be matched on Broadway, in the midst of which stalks a camel. There is a fine evening sky, with the sun setting behind a rocky spur of the distant mountain range.

The Millet was probably the most valuable picture in the collection. Two peasants, with steady step and serious faces, bear the new-born calf on a sort of rough litter into the farm-yard. The mother follows, affectionately licking the unshapely little creature, and there is a peasant woman behind her. Two little children near the door watch the arrival of the cortège with evident interest. The gray wall of the three-storied farmhouse fills the right of the picture, and the background to the left and centre is formed by dark foliage, through which on the extreme left a beam of sunlight enters in the space cleared for a gate-way. Its other fine qualities apart, the picture is a good example of Millet's skill as a colorist. The introduction of the spots of red in the woman's cheeks, the russet skin of the calf, the kerchief on the child's head at the door of the house, is done with the liveliest feeling of their value as contrasting tones, in a scheme of cool grays and greens.

Almost as fine is the "Colza Gatherers," by Breton. Sky and earth at the moment of the setting of the sun have never been more faithfully painted. The flat, dark green field, the stooping women in their gowns of dark blue give immense effect to the splendid painting of the sky and the glowing red disk of the sun, which actually looks to be the source of its light and color, just as it would in nature.

A word should be said in praise of the hanging of the collection and the draping of the main gallery. The Hanging Committee of the Academy should be marched through the American Art Association's rooms with the object of impressing upon its members the great fact that pictures of the most varied kinds may be so disposed about a room as not to interfere with one another.

REFERRING to the two notable hospital pictures, by Gervex and Brouillet, in the Paris Salon, Mr. Theodore Child writes us as follows: "The French school has hitherto neglected the history of medicine and surgery, and the derivative subjects, which so much interested the old Dutch masters; for instance, Gerard Dow, whose 'Femme Hydropique' is in the Louvre, Jan Steen, who has a famous medical picture in the Museum of

The Hague, and, above all, Rembrandt, whose 'Anatomy Lesson' has been rendered so universally popular by copies and engravings. It is interesting to notice that this subject was not chosen by the caprice of Rembrandt's genius. Amsterdam was proud of being the first town in Holland where dissecting was practised. In the beginning of the seventeenth century the professors of anatomy thought of perpetuating their features and the exact physiognomy of their teaching, and this was the origin of the very curious and almost complete series of pictures now exhibited in a special gallery of the new Museum of Amsterdam. Among these is a composition by Aart Pietersz, finished in 1603, and showing Professor Egberts surrounded by twenty-seven doctors. The same professor was painted by Thomas de Keyser, in 1619, in the act of lecturing on a skeleton. In 1617, Michiel Van Mierevelt painted Professor Van der Meer making an anatomical demonstration in presence of eighteen pupils. In 1625 Nicolas Elias painted Dr. Fonteyn lecturing on a skull to nine doctors. Here, then, are four anatomy lessons painted before Rembrandt treated the subject, of which two represent veritable dissections of corpses. The famous anatomy lesson is dated 1632. In 1656 Rembrandt painted the same subject, with Dr. Deyman surrounded by eight colleagues. This picture was partly destroyed by fire, and only a fragment of it now hangs in the Amsterdam Museum. Twenty years ago, Feyen-Perrin, drawing his inspiration from Rembrandt's composition, painted a group representing Professor Velpeau and his pupils."

IT was an excellent idea to get up an exhibition of decorative designs, and the managers of the Art Students' League are to be praised for having tried to realize it. The result, however, cannot have met expectations. The exhibition was held on April 2d, in the class-rooms of the League, and contained some good designs, but more bad ones, and not a few which were not, strictly speaking, of a decorative character, and, therefore, should not have been admitted. The cartoon of Frank Lathrop's composition over the proscenium arch at the Metropolitan Opera House held the place of honor at the end of the main room. There were good cartoons for stained glass by Will H. Low and Elihu Vedder, the latter good only as to the figures, bad enough in the conventional ornament. Carroll Beckwith had a pretty study in oils of a young girl perched in a blossoming apple-tree. John La Farge had a scheme of decoration for a church interior in his favorite blues and greens, relieved by golden browns and Venetian red. Messrs. Elwell and Warner had some excellent portrait bas-reliefs. There was a mantel in painted tiles by Volkmar, representing a forest scene, with a flight of birds. Miss Ella Wheeler had some interesting embroideries, and Miss Rosina Emmet some pretty water-colors. Such houses as Pottier & Stymus, and Crowninshield, of Boston, would have done better to have sent nothing rather than what they did send.

THE exhibition of paintings by the late George Fuller at Reichardt's, on Fifth Avenue, is worthy of more than a single visit. Fuller was one of those men whose energies, being directed into a single channel, serve only to make them the more unpopular the more talented they are. It is safe to say that he would be better appreciated even now if he had devoted himself less to his one great gift of tone and had taken pains to bring his drawing up to the popular standard, which would have been an easy matter for him. But, in that case, his fame would have been short lived, while, as matters stand, it is likely to be enduring though not widespread. Certainly, no artist ever showed more contempt for that criticism which insists on complete representation of everything visible in the subject chosen. There are at Reichardt's several portraits which come nearest to meeting the requirements of the average critic, two ideal figure-subjects and some landscapes; but in all the quality of tone is supreme, though expression and grace of form are by no means lacking. In such pictures as "She was a Witch," and "Bringing Home the Calf," the incident is of very small account; tone is almost everything.

AN excellent sketch by Mr. Charles Danforth of his Salon picture, "A Story of the War," and a charming double-page drawing by Mr. Ridgway Knight of his "In October," which have arrived too late for publication, will appear in *The Art Amateur* for June.